

TEACCH Autism Program  
Basics of Structured TEACCHing Training

Problem Solving in the Community – LISA

Lisa is an 11 year-old adolescent with an autism spectrum disorder. She has a limited expressive vocabulary that consists mainly of echoed single words and occasional meaningful words, such as “bathroom” or “drink.” Her typical means of communication at home is through the use of logos/labels, which she will give to someone to indicate her food or leisure preference. At home, her parents put the photo of the “person to ask” at the beginning of the communication strip.

Receptively, Lisa is able to understand some key words but is easily confused by too much spoken language. Teachers try to limit their verbal language with Lisa, especially when she is upset. Lisa uses a photo schedule at home as she has some difficulty understanding more abstract drawings.

Academically, Lisa can recognize numbers up to 20, and she can count and package items up to 10. Lisa has some beginning reading skills, but she pays more attention to pictures than words. Lisa’s interests include music (especially pop music), make-up, and shiny jewelry. Listening to music is one activity that can help her calm down when she is upset.

Going out to eat is one of Lisa’s favorite activities. She especially enjoys eating at the China Buffet restaurant. During previous visits to buffet restaurants, Lisa has had difficulty limiting herself to an appropriate amount of food. When caregivers have intervened to assist her, she has become quite upset and has had to leave the restaurant on several occasions.

The treatment team has decided to use structure to maximize Lisa’s chance of success on another outing to the China Buffet, as she enjoys the food so much.

Please discuss the structure that you think would be helpful for Lisa to be successful at the buffet. Design the structure for use at the restaurant and a trip schedule for the outing.